

JOHN H.

JOHN: I don't have a desire, you know, I don't have a desire. And that's initially what it starts off. You got to have a desire to do it, you know. It's not necessarily someone pushing you into a position where you're angry, where you hate yourself or you want to get back at them, you know.

POPE: Where does that desire come from, do you know?

JOHN: Hating one's self and frustrated with one's self to where as one wants to sort of like punish themselves, like flogging. That was mine. . . . We just had one to die a few months ago on the yard. He cut his self and uh. . . .Yeah, a few months ago. He didn't make it.

POPE: And he cut, he died from injuries.

JOHN: Yes. Oh, yes.

POPE: About how long ago was that?

JOHN: Maybe three and a half months. Yeah. On my side.

POPE: Was he asking for help prior to doing that?

JOHN: That's just it. It just hit us all. I asked one of the counselors about it, I say, I might need to go up there on CI. I was telling Ms. Carlisle. I might need to go up there on CI, you know to deal with this cause this is, this is too much. I actually witnessed it. My room faces and I got to see them when they drug him out the room. Everybody's running down there. Man it's all over the ceiling. It's on the walls. It's everywhere. And I'm like yeah, yeah, yeah. Ya'll see a little bit of blood and ya'll, you know. But they were saying no, you don't understand man. It's everywhere. It's everywhere. And I was like how bad can it be. I didn't even go out there and look. I didn't want to see it because I didn't want the image in my mind and with my history.

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JOHN: My roommate came in and he was like, he was like man he don't look like he's going to make it. I was like he's going to make it. Come on, he's not even a known cutter. Man he's a scratcher, man, if that. And uh, and they started making the announcement. Everybody started running. Everybody to your rooms. Everybody to your rooms. I'm like, is it that serious.

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JOHN: And then I saw the major come running down and then I saw two other white shirts come running down. I said oh oh, we got something here now. Let me stand here and see what's going on. And I saw them drag him out of his room and then

POPE: Was he still alive at that point?

JOHN: I couldn't even tell.

POPE: Okay. Can you describe an incident when you cut yourself, kind of where you went and how that kind of played itself out, mentally?

JOHN: Hm. Like this. I'm setting there and it's just like I get a glazed over look in my eye and it's like I'm gone. Not necessarily out of body but like a trance. And in my mind's eye I see myself do it, you know. And then after that that's it. You know, it's done from that point on. Maybe an hour later it doesn't matter. Fifteen minutes later after I've got the trance and sort of like accepted it in my mind, what I'm going to do. It's like I've already done it in my mind. I've already seen it. I know what I'm going to see first, when the first cut. The skin is going to rip apart. Then you're going to see the white, what they call the white meat. You know there's a white shield right up under the dark meat. After you hit that then you get the gelatinous, what they call tissue. It's gets a little bit tougher after that. No, softer then tougher. I always stop when I get to the muscle. The muscle always dulls the blade and then that's when it hurts. That sort of like you shaking out of the trance, you know, it's like electrical volts. You're coming out of it now. And then you look down you can see it. You know, when you first hit it when there's no blood. What actually wells up and puddles over and hits the floor. I can remember all that. I can see it. I

already know what I'm going to see. And that's what makes it easier to do it each time, you know, because you've seen it. So you already know what the next one is going to look like. You know exactly what it's going to look like. You know what it's going to sound like when it hits the floor. It's like everything is quiet. There's no white noise, nothing. It's just you and that. And that's when I've done the most damage.